



SNAPSHOT

Personal Growth for Political Change

Civil society leaders gain skills to resolve interpersonal conflicts and develop responsible leadership.



Photo: LRC Facilitator

Participants gather for the OPERACY training conducted in Rangoon

"[The training] felt very useful because the contents are applicable to my daily life."

-- Training Participant

July 2013 – Building trust and leadership among Burma's nascent civil society is key to a lasting, peaceful transition. But after decades of repression and division, those leading Burma's reforms often face personal and professional obstacles affecting their ability to bridge gaps and forge alliances. To be effective advocates for peace, these civil society leaders need to better understand how personal perceptions can affect professional relationships, and how these relationships can steer Burma's political reform.

In April 2013, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) program in Burma recognized the need to enhance local partners' ability to lead and serve their organizations and communities more effectively. OTI partnered with the Local Resource Center (LRC) to convene a five-day personal empowerment, success and leadership training called OPERACY for fifty individuals from civil society organizations around the country.

OPERACY, an interactive training that been taught to thousands of people around Southeast Asia, provides individuals with the tools to understand success and failure, develop productive habits, and be motivational leaders. The training helps participants to cross obstacles stemming from ingrained age, gender, social, religious, and cultural barriers existent in their communities.

The Burmese participants committed to use the approaches learned in their respective communities and organizations. "The training makes me motivated to change the way I think and work. I will provide this type of training to young people in my community," one participant said.

As Burma continues its challenging transition process, these civil society participants believe that the tools they gained will allow them to build trust and develop their organizations to do more effective work. "I learned how to live together with diversity in an organization," a participant noted.

These responsible leaders are now able to understand and bridge ethnic, religious, and social gaps in their communities - crucial to a peaceful and unified Burma.

Telling Our Story

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